

REVISION OF THE GENUS MYCTERUS CLAIRV.<sup>1</sup>

(COLEOPTERA, PYTHIDAE)

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For fifty-five years the American species of the genus *Mycterus* Clairv. have stood as Dr. Horn<sup>2</sup> left them in 1879 with four species. The American part of the genus of late years has been placed in the family *Melandryidæ* but in 1928 Mr. K. G. Blair<sup>3</sup> again placed it in the *Pythidæ* where it evidently belongs, close to the genus *Cariderus* Muls. (*Rhinosimus* Latr.)

A new species has been sent me by Mr. F. T. Scott from California and a few observations on the genus may be helpful.

*Color*: Although the color of the legs seems to be constant in the large series before me, to base the determination of the species on color alone, in a key, is often misleading without other characters, especially for the main divisions. In the species before me the color of the elytra seems to be always uniform in *scaber*, *canescens* and *elongata* n. sp. In *concolor* and *quadricollis* either piceous or testaceous, but in the former only the female may have elytra light-colored and in the latter it may be either sex.

*Sexual characters*: The several species present very good sexual characters. For instance the males of *canescens* have an oval or sometimes nearly round smooth area between the hind coxæ on the first visible abdominal segment, while the females have a median tumidity, sometimes almost a carina on the last ventral segment. The male intercoxal character in *concolor* is much larger, strongly elevated, strigulose, much wider posteriorly and pointed anteriorly and the female lacks the median tumidity of the female of *canescens*.

The sexes of both of the above species have the antennæ nearly alike, all subserrate. *M. scaber* and *quadricollis*, however, have the antennæ much modified in the males as compared with the subserrate antennæ of the females, the male of *scaber* also having a small tubercle between the hind coxæ, which is lacking in the

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<sup>1</sup> Contribution from the Entomological Branch, Dept. of Agriculture, Ottawa.

<sup>2</sup> Trans. Am. Ent. Soc., VII, October, 1879, p. 336.

<sup>3</sup> Junk Col. Cat., No. 99, 1928.

males of *quadricollis* but is replaced by a brown pubescent area, medianly placed, on each of the four ventral segments.

Specimens in collections seem to run largely to females. Of 96 *canescens* before me 26 are males and 70 females, of 80 *concolor*, 7 are males and 73 females, of *scaber* 2 are males and 11 females, while the 22 *quadricollis* are nearly equal in the sexes, 12 males and 10 females. The dates of collection probably explain this inequality as collections made in May and June contain about an equal number of both sexes, while the specimens collected in July and August are largely females. For instance of 47 specimens of *concolor* collected in the latter part of July in British Columbia only one was a male, while in the 22 specimens of *quadricollis* collected before June 15th the number of males and females is nearly equal.

The following key, while using the color of the legs as secondary characters, endeavors to separate the species by characters other than color. Unfortunately no males have yet been seen of the new species *elongata*.

#### KEY TO THE SPECIES

- A. Pronotum elongate, wider at base than at apex.
  - B. Vestiture canescent or silvery with elytral punctures with stiff white bristles, fore and middle legs flavous, hind legs more or less piceous.....1. *canescens* Horn.
  - BB. Vestiture sparse, generally inconspicuous with all three pairs of legs the same color.
    - C. Third segment of the antennæ not much longer than the fourth, form elongate with parallel sides to the elytra.....2. *elongata* n. sp.
    - CC. Third segment of the antennæ twice as long as fourth, form comparatively short, sides of elytra more or less rounded and generally slightly wider toward apex.
      - D. Antennæ of both sexes subserrate, legs piceous, Western species .....3. *concolor* Lec.
      - DD. Antennæ of male with segments laterally produced, female subserrate, legs flavous, Eastern species.....4. *scaber* Hald.
- AA. Pronotum quadrate, not wider at base than at apex, distal segments of antennæ in male laterally produced, female subserrate.....5. *quadricollis* Horn.

#### 1. MYCTERUS CANESCENS Horn

1879, Trans. Amer. Ent. Soc., VII, p. 337.

Length, male 3-4 mm.; female 3-6 mm. Piceous with antennæ, clypeus and fore and middle legs flavous, hind legs piceous; ves-

ture silvery, the punctures of the elytra each having a stiff white hair.

Males are generally smaller than females and have between the hind coxæ a round or slightly elliptical, raised, denuded spot which is very finely punctate, the last ventral segment not reflexed at the margin. Females vary tremendously in size, some of them being as small as the smallest males; the last ventral segment is also not reflexed on the margin, and has a median tumidity, sometimes becoming a short carina, by which the females can always be told from *concolor*.

The 96 specimens, 26 males and 70 females, before me, are from all parts of California and southern Oregon. Like *concolor* it is often found on flowers of *Ceanothus*.

## 2. *Mycterus elongata* Hopping, n. sp.

Length, female 7 mm. Piceous with legs, antennæ, head, pronotum and basal margin of elytra dark rufous. Sides of elytra parallel and form elongate. Head below the eyes with margins scarcely elevated; antennæ slender, subserrate, with the third segment very little longer than the fourth, front of head densely punctured; pronotum wider at base than at apex and as densely punctured as the head; elytra with faint indications of carinæ on the disc, punctures irregularly placed, rather wide apart and shallow, becoming somewhat denser toward apex, sides rather abrupt, the lateral margins feeble; last ventral segment without median tubercle, convex, with margin not distinctly reflexed.

Holotype, female, No. 3863 in the Canadian National Collection, bears the label "Sequoia Nat. Park, Cal. 6-1930. F. T. Scott, Collector." Three paratypes, females, two bearing the label "Kaweah 7-9-33" and one "Sequoia Nat. Park, Cal. 6-1933" are in the collections of Mr. F. T. Scott of Visalia, Calif., of Mr. Roy Wagner of Fresno, Calif. and in that of the author. Kaweah, Calif., is just outside of the Sequoia National Park in Tulare Co., California.

This species differs from all the other known species of America north of Mexico in its convex elongate form and parallel sides of the elytra as well as in color.

## 3. *MYCTERUS CONCOLOR* Lec.

1853, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci. Phila., p. 235.

Length, male 3.5-5 mm. Female, 4-7 mm. In a large series of this species the males are entirely piceous but the females may

be piceous or with flavous elytra. Dr. Horn suppressed his var. *flavipennis* as only occasional females have the flavous or brownish elytra. The males have between the hind coxæ an abruptly raised shining process or umbone, wide at the base and pointed at the apex between the coxæ. The females have the margin of the last ventral segment strongly reflexed without a median tubercle or carina.

7 males, 37 females, examined from California, Oregon and British Columbia. Dr. Horn gives Colorado, New Mexico, and Nevada while the Leng list gives New Mexico and Southern California. It is probably found from the Rockies westward, often on species of flowering *Ceanothus*.

#### 4. MYCTERUS SCABER Hald.

1843, Proc. Acad. Nat. Sci., Phila. p. 308.

Length male 3.5-4.5 mm., female 3.5-5.5 mm. Besides being an Eastern species, the males can always be told from those of *concolor* by the transverse segments 3 to 11 of the antennæ in *scaber*, these in *concolor* being subserrate. The females strongly resemble each other but differ in the last ventral segment, which is small and barely if at all reflexed on the margin in *scaber* but broadly and strongly reflexed in *concolor*. The male of *scaber* has only a small tubercle between the hind coxæ. Only ten specimens are before me, 2 males and 7 females, from Massachusetts and Virginia but it is said to occur all along the Atlantic Coast.

#### 5. MYCTERUS QUADRICOLLIS Horn.

1874, Trans. Am. Ent. Soc. V, p. 42.

Length male 5-6 mm., female 5-6.5 mm. Besides having the pronotum as wide as long with vague impressions, this species has the front of the head before the eyes, antennæ, legs and margin of the last ventral segment flavous. The elytra in both sexes are either black or flavous and shining. The males have the antennal segments 4-10, much wider than long, and the females segments 4-10 approximately as wide as long. The last ventral segment in the male is broadly expanded, but in the female it is small, abrupt, without expanded margins and almost diamond-shaped. Ventral segments 1-4 with a median patch of brownish pubescence in the male. It is generally found in the deserts of the southwest on the blossoms of *Yucca arborescens* Torr.